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Letter dated 25 May 2006 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to refer to the decision adopted by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union at its 40th meeting, held at Addis Ababa on 6 October 2005. I also refer to Security Council resolution 1633 (2005), of 21 October 2005, which established an International Working Group to assist the Government of Côte d'Ivoire in the implementation of its programme and consolidate and strengthen the existing follow-up Mechanisms.

Please find attached the text of the communiqué issued by the International Working Group at the conclusion of its seventh ministerial meeting, held in Abidjan on 19 May 2006 (see annex).

I would be grateful if you would bring this communiqué to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

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Final communiqué of the seventh ministerial meeting of the International Working Group on Côte d'Ivoire

Abidjan, 19 May 2006

1. The seventh ministerial meeting of the International Working Group was held in Abidjan on 19 May 2006 under the joint chairmanship of Mr. Rodolphe Adada, Minister of State, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Francophonie of the Congo, and Mr. Pierre Schori, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Côte d'Ivoire. The meeting was attended by Ministers of France, Ghana, Guinea and the Republic of South Africa, the High Representative for the elections in Côte d'Ivoire, the Executive Secretary of the Economic Community of West African States and the representatives of Benin, Niger, Nigeria, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, the African Union, the European Union and the International Organization of la Francophonie.

2. The Group considered the sixth report of the Mediation Group. It heard a statement by the Prime Minister on progress made in the peace process. It also heard the Minister of Defence, accompanied by the Chiefs of Staff of the Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles, the Coordinator of the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme, the Chairman of the Independent Electoral Commission and the High Representative for the elections.

3. The Group welcomes the launching of the field court session pilot project in seven locations, including Abidjan and the south and north of the country, as well as arrangements being made by the Chiefs of Staff with a view to the pre-cantonment of the combatants. The Group also notes that this first concrete step towards the effective implementation of the processes of identification and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration was made possible by recent initiatives of the Prime Minister in consultation with the Head of State.

4. However, the Group expresses its deep concern regarding the considerable delays in the implementation of a number of essential tasks envisaged in the road map. In this connection, the Group appeals to all the Ivorian parties to continue to cooperate closely with the Government with a view to ensuring that the processes of identification and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration are extended to the entire country immediately following the completion of the field court session pilot project and the pre-cantonment of combatants.

5. Bearing in mind the urgency of creating the necessary conditions for holding elections by 31 October 2006, the Group stresses the need to take measures in order to accelerate the process that has been initiated.

6. In this respect, the Chiefs of Staff of the Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire and the Armed Forces of the Forces Nouvelles must carry out without delay their renewed commitment to implement the timetable for the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration signed on 9 July 2005, by setting new dates.

7. The Group urges the Government to accelerate the redeployment of the State administration with a view to restoring basic services for the local population,

guaranteeing the free movement of persons and goods throughout the country and promoting the genuine reunification of the country.

8. In order to speed up the initiation of the electoral process, the national authorities should facilitate, among other measures, the extension throughout the country of the activities of the Independent Electoral Commission and of the National Commission for the Supervision of Identification.

9. The Group expresses its deep concern over the persistence of the culture of impunity and an intensification of incitement to hatred and violence, which run counter to the spirit of dialogue and cooperation advocated by the main political leaders. In this respect, the Group strongly condemns the acts of violence committed against the population, political leaders and the impartial forces, as well as the systematic denigration of representatives of the international community by certain organs of the media and political figures. The Group urges the national authorities to take the necessary measures to speed up the investigations under way, and to identify and punish those responsible for such acts.

10. The Group issues a solemn warning to all those who are obstructing or seeking to obstruct, either directly or indirectly, the implementation of the road map. It invites the Committee of the Security Council established by resolution 1572 (2004) to take appropriate measures against them.

11. The Group encourages the Head of State and the Prime Minister to take all necessary measures to consolidate the political consensus on the implementation of the road map.

12. The Group will hold its next meeting on 23 June 2006 in Côte d'Ivoire.